

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 /055 W  
-----251238Z 100354 /12

R 250950Z MAR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6425  
INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL  
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
USLO PEKING  
CINCPAC HONOLULU  
COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TOKYO 4246

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, JA  
SUBJECT: JAPANESE UPPER HOUSE ELECTION

SUMMARY. UPPER HOUSE ELECTIONS, IN WHICH RULING LDP'S  
MAJORITY AT STAKE, WILL TAKE PLACE IN EARLY JULY.  
CAMPAIGNS WILL NOT BE IN FULL SWING UNTIL MAY, BUT  
PARTIES HAVE ALREADY NAMED MOST CANDIDATES AND HAVE  
LAID OUT GENERAL STRATEGIES. COOPERATION AMONG  
OPPOSITION PARTIES TO SUPPORT EACH OTHER'S CANDIDATES  
IN DISTRICTS WHERE ONE IS WEAK, IF WIDESPREAD AND  
SUCCESSFUL, COULD RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL DEFEAT FOR LDP.  
NEW LIBERAL CLUB, WITH DRAMATICALLY INCREASED RECENT  
POLL RATINGS, MAY ALSO DRAW VOTES AWAY FROM LDP. WHILE  
BACK IS TO WALL, LDP COULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF GAPS IN  
OPPOSITION RANKS AND PROFIT FROM NLC'S WEAK ORGANIZATIONAL  
BASE. BETTING AT THIS EARLY STAGE IS THAT LDP WILL LOSE  
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ITS ALREADY SLIM MAJORITY AND THAT JSP WILL ALSO DECLINE.  
CENTRIST PARTIES EXPECTED TO EMERGE WITH SIGNIFICANT  
GAINS. IN CAMPAIGN WHICH PROMISES TO BE HARD FOUGHT, NO  
SINGLE FOCAL POINT AND NO ISSUES INVOLVING US HAVE  
APPEARED. END SUMMARY.

1. JAPAN IS EXPECTED TO HOLD HOUSE OF COUNCILLORS

(UPPER HOUSE) ELECTIONS JULY 3, WHICH COULD RESULT IN RULING LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (LDP) LOSING ITS UNBROKEN TWENTY-TWO YEAR CONTROL OF BOTH HOUSES OF DIET. COUNCILLORS' TERMS ARE SIX YEARS, HALF COMING UP FOR ELECTION EVERY THREE YEARS. OF TOTAL OF 252 COUNCILLORS, 126 WILL BE ELECTED IN JULY, 50 FROM NATIONAL CONSTITUENCY, 76 FROM PREFECTURE-WIDE DISTRICTS. IN NATIONAL CONSTITUENCY EACH VOTER CHOOSES ONE NAME FROM LIST OF DISTINGUISHED, OR AT LEAST NATIONALLY KNOWN, CANDIDATES; THERE IS NO PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION. NUMBER OF COUNCILLORS ELECTED IN EACH OF JAPAN'S 47 PREFECTURAL DISTRICTS VARIES FROM ONE TO FOUR, DEPENDING ON POPULATION. TWENTY-SIX DISTRICTS ELECT ONLY ONE COUNCILLOR; TWO, TOKYO AND HOKKAIDO, ELECT FOUR. LDP NOW HOLDS 127 OF 252 UPPER HOUSE SEATS, MAJORITY OF TWO SEATS. OF THESE 65 WILL BE CONTESTED THIS YEAR, 22 IN NATIONAL CONSTITUENCY, 43 PREFECTURAL. OF OPPOSITION'S 125 SEATS, 61 WILL BE CONTESTED THIS YEAR, 28 IN NATIONAL CONSTITUENCY, 33 IN PREFECTURAL.

2. ALTHOUGH OFFICIAL CAMPAIGN PERIOD IS LEGALLY SET AT ONLY TWENTY-THREE DAYS, CAMPAIGNS ARE ALREADY UNDERWAY AND WILL REACH FULL SWING AFTER UPPER HOUSE PASSES JFY-77 BUDGET BILL AND UNIONS' ANNUAL SPRING WAGE OFFENSIVE IS OVER, PROBABLY IN EARLY MAY.

3. ALL PARTIES HAVE YET TO FINALIZE ROSTERS OF CANDIDATES. LDP WOULD LIKE TO RUN 26 NATIONAL CONSTITUENCY CANDIDATES, BUT SO FAR HAS ONLY 22. IN YEAR WHICH HAS SEEN DEFEAT OF LDP IN DECEMBER LOWER HOUSE ELECTIONS, QUALITY CONFIDENTIAL

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CANDIDATES FOR NATIONAL CONSTITUENCY HAVE NOT BEEN FORTHCOMING. LDP HAS NAMED 60 CANDIDATES FOR PREFECTURAL DISTRICTS, AT LEAST ONE IN EACH, BUT MAY SOON NAME MORE. STRICTER CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION LAW HAS, HOWEVER, APPARENTLY REDUCED LDP COFFERS AND MAY HOLD DOWN NUMBER OF LDP'S PREFECTURAL CANDIDATES. PARTY IS ALSO ATTEMPTING TO COPE WITH SUBSTANTIAL IMAGE PROBLEMS RESULTING FROM SUCCESSIVE SCANDALS. MAIN LDP STRATEGY IN PREFECTURAL DISTRICTS, AS IN 1974 ELECTION, IS TO NAME CANDIDATES WHO HAVE HELD PROMINENT LOCAL OFFICE SUCH AS MAYOR OR GOVERNOR. THIS STRATEGY WAS FAIRLY SUCCESSFUL IN 1974, AT LEAST IN LESS-POPULATED RURAL DISTRICTS.

4. LARGEST OPPOSITION PARTY, JAPAN SOCIALIST (JSP), NOW HAS 61 SEATS, 32 OF WHICH WILL BE CONTESTED, 7 IN NATIONAL CONSTITUENCY, 25 IN PREFECTURAL DISTRICTS. IT WILL RUN 12 NATIONAL CONSTITUENCY AND, SO FAR, 41 PREFECTURAL CANDIDATES. JSP'S CAMPAIGN WILL FOCUS ON MINIMIZING LOSSES IN PREFECTURAL DISTRICTS. ITS PLANNERS

TELL US THEY FEEL ANY NEW SEATS JSP PICKS UP WILL COME  
AS RESULT OF CAMPAIGN COOPERATION AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER  
OPPOSITION PARTIES. JSP'S CHRONIC LACK OF FUNDS IS  
AGAIN IMPORTANT CAMPAIGN PROBLEM.

5. CLEAN GOVERNMENT PARTY (CGP) NOW HAS 24 SEATS, 10 OF  
WHICH WILL BE CONTESTED, 8 NATIONAL CONSTITUENCY AND  
2 PREFECTURAL. IT HAS SO FAR NAMED 9 NATIONAL CONSTITUENCY  
AND 7 PREFECTURAL CANDIDATES. CGP'S STRATEGY IS TO RUN  
CANDIDATES ONLY WHERE THERE IS REAL CHANCE OF WINNING. FOR  
PREFECTURAL SEATS, THIS MEANS MAINLY IN MULTI-SEAT DISTRICTS  
IN URBAN AREAS. IN NON-URBAN DISTRICTS IT MAY BACK  
OPPOSITION CANDIDATES ON SELECTIVE, BARTER BASIS.

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6. UNLIKE CGP, COMMUNISTS (JCP) WILL AS USUAL RUN  
CANDIDATES IN EVERY PREFECTURAL DISTRICT, EVEN WITHOUT  
CHANCE OF WINNING, TO STRENGTHEN LOCAL PARTY ORGANIZATIONS  
AND KEEP JCP NAMES AND POLICIES BEFORE PUBLIC. POSSIBILITY  
EXISTS OF COOPERATION IN FEW DISTRICTS WITH JSP, BUT NO  
DEALS HAVE YET BEEN WORKED OUT. JCP NOW HAS 20 SEATS,  
9 OF WHICH (TWO PREFECTURAL, SEVEN NATIONAL) WILL BE  
CONTESTED. IT WILL RUN 7 NATIONAL CONSTITUENCY CANDIDATES,  
WITH PARTY CHAIRMAN MIYAMOTO HEADING LIST IN HIS FIRST

ATTEMPT TO ENTER DIET. JCP REPORTEDLY HAS NO FUNDING PROBLEMS.

7. DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST PARTY (DSP) HAS TEN SEATS, FIVE OF WHICH (TWO PREFECTURAL, THREE NATIONAL) WILL BE CONTESTED. IT HAS NAMED FOUR CANDIDATES FOR NATIONAL CONSTITUENCY, AND, SO FAR, SEVEN FOR PREFECTURAL DISTRICTS. LIKE CGP, IT MAY SUPPORT OTHER PARTIES ON BARTER BASIS  
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IN AREAS WHERE IT WILL NOT RUN OWN CANDIDATES.

8. NEW LIBERAL CLUB (NLC) WILL MAKE FIRST UPPER HOUSE CAMPAIGN. IT IS ALSO STILL LOOKING FOR CANDIDATES AND HAS SO FAR NAMED FIVE, INCLUDING NOTED ECONOMIC PLANNER SABURO OKITA, FOR NATIONAL CONSTITUENCY AND THREE FOR PREFECTURAL. ITS STRATEGY IS TO USE ITS "FRESH" NON-LDP CONSERVATIVE IMAGE TO ATTRACT CONSERVATIVE-LEANING FLOATING VOTE. RECENT POLLS GIVE NLC HIGH POPULARITY RATING (9-15 PCT), BUT LACK OF CAMPAIGN ORGANIZATION AND FUNDS MAY HANDICAP IT. IN FUND-RAISING EFFORT UNUSUAL FOR JAPAN, IT IS CURRENTLY SELLING NLC "T-SHIRTS" THROUGHOUT NATION.

9. THUS FAR, NO SINGLE CAMPAIGN ISSUE HAS EMERGED. LOCKHEED SCANDAL, IMPORTANT FACTOR IN LDP'S DEFEAT IN LOWER HOUSE ELECTION IN DECEMBER, HAS GROWN STALE AND, DESPITE EFFORTS BY OPPOSITION PARTIES TO GATHER EVIDENCE, KCIA LINKS TO LDP HAVE NOT BEEN ESTABLISHED. LIKELIHOOD IS THAT, TO EXTENT NATIONAL ISSUES ARE INVOLVED, THEY WILL RELATE TO ECONOMY, I.E., CONTINUED INFLATION AND RELATIVELY HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT. AS YET THERE IS NO INDICATION ISSUE RELATING TO US, INCLUDING MST, WILL SURFACE. THUS, LOCAL ISSUES IN PREFECTURAL DISTRICTS, PERSONAL APPEAL OF NATIONAL CONSTITUENCY CANDIDATES, POPULARITY OF PARTIES AND THEIR CAMPAIGN TACTICS AND FINANCING WILL LARGELY DETERMINE OUTCOME.

10. UNCERTAIN FACTOR IS POSSIBLE ELECTION COOPERATION AMONG OPPOSITION PARTIES. JSP IS NOW ACTIVELY NEGOTIATING FOR SUPPORT FROM JCP, CGP AND DSP IN VARIOUS DISTRICTS. CGP'S COOPERATION IN EIGHT SINGLE-SEAT DISTRICTS, FOR EXAMPLE, WAS KEY TO JSP VICTORIES IN 1971 ELECTION. CGP, WHICH RECEIVED LITTLE HELP FROM JSP IN PAST ELECTIONS, SEEMS LESS WILLING TO SUPPORT JSP THIS

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TIME, ALTHOUGH IT WILL APPARENTLY AGREE TO EXCHANGE OF SUPPORT IN ONE OR TWO DISTRICTS WITH DSP. CONSERVATIVE NLC WILL PROBABLY NOT BE INVOLVED IN COOPERATION ARRANGEMENTS.

11. ALTHOUGH FAR TOO SOON TO FORECAST ACCURATELY, EARLY BETTING IS THAT CONTINUING CONSERVATIVE IMAGE PROBLEMS WILL PERMIT NLC TO TAKE AWAY ENOUGH VOTES FROM LDP TO CAUSE IT TO LOSE 3-5 SEATS -- AND ITS UPPER HOUSE MAJORITY. ON OTHER HAND, THERE IS POSSIBILITY THAT OPPOSITION PARTIES, FAILING TO MAXIMIZE CAMPAIGN COOPERATION, WILL CANCEL OUT ONE ANOTHER IN ENOUGH DISTRICTS FOR LDP CANDIDATES TO WIN. CENTRIST PARTIES -- DPS, CGP AND NLC -- HAVING DONE WELL IN DECEMBER LOWER HOUSE ELECTION, ARE LIKELY TO MAKE GAINS. JSP, WITH STALE IMAGE, RECENTLY STRENGTHENED EXTREME LEFT WING, AND FUNDING PROBLEMS, WILL PROBABLY LOSE SEVERAL SEATS EVEN IF IT BENEFITS FROM SOME OPPOSITION COOPERATION. DECISION BY FORMER JSP VICE CHAIRMAN EDA TO LEAVE PARTY AND RUN AS INDEPENDENT WILL PROBABLY HURT JSP. COMMUNISTS, ABLE TO ORGANIZE DISCIPLINED CAMPAIGNS, WILL PROBABLY STAY EVEN OR MAKE SMALL GAINS DESPITE CONTINUED LOW POPULARITY.  
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## Message Attributes

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